

REMARKS

Claims 1-45 are now pending in the application. Minor amendments have been made to some of the claims to simply overcome the objections and rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the objections and rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

Claims 1-24 are objected to because of minor informalities (i.e., typographical errors) in Claims 1 and 14. Applicants have amended these claims to overcome this objection.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 4 and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants have amended these claims to overcome this § 112 rejection and now believes that this rejection has been addressed and rendered moot.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-7, 11-18, 22-30 and 34-35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Williams (U.S. Pat. No. 6,557,680). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present application is entitled to a filing date of April 23, 2001 which is earlier than the §102(e) date of June 25, 2001 for the Williams '680 patent. Accordingly, Applicants believe that the Williams '680 patent does not constitute prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and respectfully request that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

NEW CLAIMS

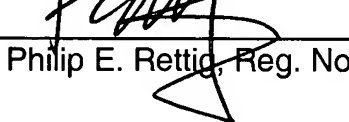
The Applicants have presented new Claims 36-45 for consideration by the Examiner. Independent Claim 36 is generally a modified version of independent Claim 1 while dependent Claim 41 is generally a revised version of independent Claim 25. Applicants believe that all of the new claims are allowable over the Williams '680 patent and all other prior art currently of record.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1240.

Respectfully submitted,

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